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636

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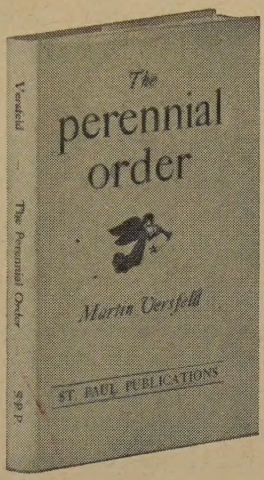

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PASTORAL LIFE

VOL. VI, No. 6 NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 1958

Explaining God's Existence to the Doubtful

JOHN A. O'BRIEN, PH.D.
The University of Notre Dame

"Father," said Mrs. Mitchell, "my husband Tom has been going to a class of instruction conducted by a young priest in our parish. He has gone to five instructions and each time the priest presented a new proof of God's existence. He then cited all the possible objections and attempted to refute them.

"Tom had no doubts about God's existence, but after listening to every conceivable objection he is beginning to wonder about it. It has left him confused and upset. He has lost interest and has dropped out of the course. Isn't there something wrong with such instructions?"

Father O'Brien, noted author and lecturer, whose works on convert-making are standard reading in this country, presents his fifth article of a planned series. Reprints of his previous articles are available from PASTORAL LIFE.

I had just addressed a large meeting of parishioners in a diocese which was about to launch a Crusade for Souls. Apparently Mrs. Mitchell thought that it would be helpful for us to know how her prayers and hopes for her husband's conversion had been at least temporarily thwarted.

As she spoke, I could see the newly ordained priest using his seminary notes on St. Thomas' five classic proofs, echoing all the objections brought forward by his professor or cited in his textbook. While suitable for theological students, such lectures are not geared to the needs of the average layman: they will only kill his interest in the whole course.

As the overwhelming majority of persons who come to parish Information Classes believe in the ex-

istence of God, it will rarely be necessary to demonstrate that truth at length. Ocasionally, however, individuals who have read books written by agnostics will need to have the evidence of God's existence explained to them. This can be done in a simple manner which will bring conviction to any open mind.

If a tape recorder were placed in the room in which I was demonstrating this truth to a couple of prospective converts uncertain about this fundamental truth, the following is substantially the conversation that would be recorded.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown: Good evening, Father!

Father: Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Brown! This evening I am going to explain the most fundamental truth of the Christian religion—the existence of a personal God and something about His nature.

Mr. Brown: (somewhat mystified) But, Father, don't you have to make an act of faith in God's existence, accept it on faith, not on evidence?

WATCH IMPLIES A WATCHMAKER

Father: No, Mr. Brown. The evidence is so clear and so overwhelming that all one has to do is look at the evidence and draw the only logical conclusion. I'll summarize the reasoning. Wherever you have the arrangement of parts to achieve a purposed or preconceived end, you have the work of intelligence. But the universe, from a blade of grass to the farthest star, is replete with such orderly arrangement and harmonious plan. Therefore the universe bespeaks the work of an Almighty Creator.

Let me illustrate. Look at a watch Examine the arrangement of its parts, the spring, the crystal, the face, the minute and hour hands. All is so arranged that the hour hand will travel from one hour to the next in the same time that the minute hand traverses the whole dial, moving exactly twelve times faster than the hour hand. No one would say that the watch is the result of accident or chance. It is the result of plan, of coordination,

Vol. VI, No. 6 PASTORAL LIFE November-December, 1958

▶ Pastoral Life is owned, edited and published bi-monthly, with ecclesiastical approval, by the Society of St. Paul, 2187 Victory Blvd., Staten Island 14, N. Y., as a pastoral aid for priests. — Telephone: GIbraltar 2-0047. — Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office of Staten Island, March 25, 1953, under the act of March 3, 1879. — Copyrighted, 1953, by the Society of St. Paul in the State of New York. — Member of the CPA.

▶ Subscription Price: $1.50 yearly; 2 years $2.50; 4 years $5.00; Canada & Foreign $2.00.

▶ Advertising: Angela Crawley, 28 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, Ill., national representative.

▶ Editorial Correspondence: Manuscripts, remittances, changes of address, etc., must be addressed to: *The Editor, PASTORAL LIFE, 2187 Victory Blvd., Staten Island 14, N.Y.*

of a thinking agent. Simple, so far, isn't it?

Mrs. Brown: So simple and clear that no one could dispute it.

Father: Good! Then we'll go a little farther. The stars move in their appointed orbits with a precision which shames the most accurate clock. It will falter, at least, a few seconds per month in the measurement of time, and will have to be corrected by the clock of the stars as caught by the United States Naval Observatory at Annapolis. Here, then, is order, plan, purpose and design written in the very heart of the stars and traced out in all their vast orbits. The laws by which they wing their flight through space were traced out for them, and inserted in them, by a Supreme Lawmaker.

Inescapable then is the simple conclusion: As the watch implies a watchmaker, so the universe implies a God. As the watch demands an adequate cause in the form of an intelligent watchmaker, so the universe, vastly greater in size, complexity of organization, and adjustment of parts, demands an adequate cause in the form of a Being of vastly greater power and intelligence. This is the Being whom we call by the venerable name of God. Is that clear, Mr. Brown?

A BLADE OF GRASS BEARS WITNESS

Mr. Brown: Yes, I don't see how any intelligent person could deny that.

Father: Everything that the eye falls upon, if examined carefully, will be found to display marvelous coordination for the achievement of a purposed end. Take, for instance, a blade of grass. Hand it to a biochemist and tell him to analyze it into its constituent chemical elements. This he can do. Then tell him to put them back again in such a way that they will carry on the process of growth, of photosynthesis—the rudimentary action of all vegetal life. I once requested a distinguished biochemist to do this.

"Oh, that's impossible," he replied. "Neither I nor all the scientists in the world working together with all the chemical equipment ever devised can do such a thing."

"Why can't you?" I asked "Aren't you and your colleagues intelligent?"

"Yes (with a smile), at least we think we are."

"But aren't the elements, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen and the other elements which compose a blade of grass, unintelligent?"

"Yes."

"Then why can't you with all your scientific enlightenment do what these unintelligent elements in a blade of grass do every day of its life?"

"Because they are acting under the direction of a law placed within the organism by a Supreme Intelligence, Almighty God."

There you have the conclusion

to which every penetrating investigation of every form of life carries you. If we could look deeply enough into the mysterious and unfathomed network of law in a speck of dust, a grain of sand, a blade of grass, we would see God and understand man, nature and God. Tennyson gave admirable expression to this mighty truth when, in passing through a woods, he beheld a flower bursting out of the crevice in a wall, which he thus apostrophized:

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

Mrs. Brown: That poem tells the story in a beautiful but simple way.

"PLENTY DIFFICULT" SAYS BERTELLI

Father: True, Mrs. Brown. But all words fail to do justice to the abiding presence of God in nature, in the whole vast universe, and in the beating heart of man. They point like slanting rays of light to the Source from which they come. I've narrated a conversation I had with a noted biochemist to make clear the existence of a law or principle within a blade of grass and within every living thing, which mirrors the thought of a Supreme Lawmaker. As the point is crucial in the discussion of God's existence, I would like to relate another incident along this line, if you'd be interested.

Mrs. Brown: Sure, stories are always interesting, and they get across a point in a way that sticks.

Father: One autumn day I was talking with Angelo Bertelli, the quarterback who had just guided the Notre Dame football team to a national championship. Through his skill in directing the team and his wizardry in handling the ball and in throwing forward passes, he had scaled the glamorous heights of football fame, achieving the honor coveted by every American boy, that of captain of the mythical All-American team.

"Bert," I said, "you don't find it too difficult to direct the manuevers of eleven players through the tricky T formation, do you?"

"Not too difficult," he replied slowly and with becoming modesty.

"Suppose you had a team of one hundred players instead of the usual eleven, wouldn't that be pretty difficult to direct through all those carefully timed and coordinated maneuvers?"

"Plenty difficult."

Now suppose you had a team of a thousand billion players. Could you call signals for a team

of that size and guide each individual player in the discharge of his specific assignments?"

"That's beyond me," laughed Bert, as he threw up his hands in token of surrender. "You'd have to send an S.O.S. for some superman from Mars for that quarterbacking."

A DIVINE QUARTERBACK

We were standing under an oak tree whose leaves were still clinging stubbornly to the branches. Plucking one of the leaves and holding it before him, I said:

"Yet that is what the quarterback in that leaf is doing, calling signals for the thousand billion atoms composing it, guiding them in the complex maneuvers of the dance of life and in the tricky T formations of photosynthesis. These are formations which, with all our scouting and all our peering through microscopes and into test tubes, we've never been able to fathom or diagnose, much less duplicate."

"Some quarterback," smiled Bert. "I wish he'd give me a few lessons in the art. Then I'd really go places."

Yes, there's a quarterback in every leaf, in every blade of grass, in every living thing, calling signals which spell out the game of life and enable the organism to cross the goal line of mature growth and pile up a score of progeny—a score so high that puny man has never been able to add it up. The quarterback, the vital principle, the *elan vital*, as Bergson calls it, within the leaf is calling signals whispered in its ear by the Supreme Intelligence, the Divine Quarterback of all nature, the infinite Creator, God Himself. His is the true wizardry in comparison with which human skill is but the awkwardness of amateurs and of children. Alfred Noyes describes it well:

I know a wizardry can take a buried acorn
And whisper forests out of it to tower against the sky.
I know a wizardry can break a freckled egg shell
And shake a thrush out of it for every hawthorne bush.
I know a wizardry can take a wisp of sun-fire
And round it to a planet and roll it through the sky.

Mr. Brown: (deeply moved, slowly) Yes, God makes all human quarterbacks look like rank amateurs in comparison. His is the wizardry which holds you spellbound and breathless.

"FINGERPRINTING GOD"

Mrs. Brown: Tell me, Father, do these scientists who have dipped down into the secret depths of the atom and have harnessed some of its power, catch

glimpses of the working of a Supreme Intelligence?

Father: Yes, they do. I happen to be acquainted with two of the physicists whose researches into the nucleus of the atom won for them the Nobel Prize—Andrew Andrews Millikan and Arthur H. Compton. Their researches have filled them with awe and reverence before the network of law which the Almighty has wrapped within an atom. I was once privileged to confer upon Prof. Millikan the Cardinal Newman Award and had him as my guest. I invited a distinguished group of scientists at the University of Illinois to discuss with him some of the philosophical implications of his work. Do you know how he described his researches into the nature of the cosmic ray high up in the stratosphere of the sky?

Mrs. Brown: No, but I'd be interested in knowing.

Father: His expression is worth remembering. He described it as (slowly, reverently) "fingerprinting God." He has a wide and intimate acquaintance with scientists in America and in Europe, and he stated that he did not know of a single first class mind among all the scientists that regarded the materialistic explanation—the blind reaction of matter and its forces—as offering a satisfactory explanation of the observed phenomena of nature.

This is but another way of saying that the laws of nature, ferreted by the scientist, bespeak the work of a Supreme Legislator, the Creator of the Universe, Almighty God. A few weeks later, I heard Professor Arthur Compton develop the same theme with equal reverence and earnestness. It is fair to say that the deeper one penetrates into the knowledge of nature's laws, the deeper becomes his reverence for the wisdom and power of the Creator.

Mrs. Brown: Wouldn't the words of the psalmist apply here: "The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God"?

Father: (beaming approval) Excellent. Mrs. Brown! that's the climax with which I'd like to end the discussion of God's existence.

Mr. Brown: (gratitude echoing in his voice) Glad you brought it out, Father. I believed all right, but I fear I wouldn't have been very articulate if anyone had asked me to prove it. Now I understand why you said that God's existence is a truth which can be demonstrated by logic, by reason, and is not a matter of blind faith.

Father: Now a brief word about God's nature. God so far transcends us that all words fail to do justice to His being or to mirror accurately His attributes. Suffice it to say that God is infinite, eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing; in short, that He is infinitely perfect. Think of all the lovable attributes which you have ever observed in

the friends you admired and loved most. Put all those attributes together and raise them to the highest possible perfection and you get some faint idea of the infinitely perfect and infinitely lovable character of God.

The words of St. Paul are worth recalling in this connection: "We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known." We shall have to wait till we reach Heaven to enjoy the Beatific Vision, to see God in His infinite perfections and to enjoy the rapture of His infinite love.

Mrs. Brown: It's a great theme, Father, and calculated to keep one humble, when she reflects on her own littleness in comparison with the infinite God Who made us all.

Mr. Brown: I can see now, Father, why you stress the importance of this truth. The bottom falls out of all religion unless there is a personal God to whom we are responsible and to whom we can turn in prayer for succor and strength.

Father: Yes, God is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of all things. One's entire religious life will be greatly vitalized by realizing clearly that God is our Heavenly Father Who sees our every deed, hears our every word and reads even our unwritten thoughts. God is our Heavenly Father, and religion is the golden bond uniting the creature to his Creator. Pray to God morning and evening, love Him and serve Him, and you will achieve the purpose for which God has created you, namely, the salvation of your immortal soul.

Mr. Brown: Well, Father we've learned a lot tonight.

Mrs. Brown: It will help us put more devotion into our prayers.

Father: That's the important thing—getting closer to God. All my words are but a trellised ladder to enable you both to climb to the feet of God. Well good night, Mr. Brown! Good night, Mrs. Brown!

Mr. and Mrs. Brown: (together) Good night, Father! And many, many thanks!

Let it be very clear, beloved sons, that the root of modern evils and of their baneful consequences is not, as in pre-Christian times or in regions yet pagan, invincible ignorance of the eternal destiny of man and of the principal means of attaining it; rather it is lethargy of the spirit, weakness of the will and coldness of the heart. Men, infected by such contagion, try, as if in justification, to cloak themselves with the darkness of the past and seek an alibi in errors, both old and new. It is necessary, therefore, to act upon their wills.

—Pope Pius XII

The Priest's Time

EDWARD F. GARESCHE S.J.

EVERYONE has exactly the same number of hours and minutes to dispose of every day. The mysterious wave of time which carries us all on its very crest, sweeps us all along with uniform motion. No one has a second more to use during the twenty-four hours or a second less, than anyone else. This being so how astounding it is, when one thinks of it, that some succeed in doing so much more than others!

At first sight, one may be tempted to say that it is a question of talent. Some are much more gifted by nature than others. This may be true in special instances, but taking priests by and large they do not vary so much in natural gifts. Study a class of clerical students, find out their aptitudes and their abilities, and you will discover no very astounding range of talent or lack of it. The great majority of men who become priests, like the great majority of men who enter any way of life, are average in their natural gifts.

Then too it is not the most talented who succeed in accomplishing the most. We have all known of unusually gifted individuals who were rather disappointing, to themselves and others, in the sum total of their achievements. We have also known men who were considered of no great special talent and who yet accomplished an extraordinary amount of useful and successful work, much more than their associates. What is it then that enables some priests, as it enables some laymen, to excel others in actual achievement, to do more and more fruitful work for themselves and for others?

One may look at the question from various viewpoints. But one very useful viewpoint to consider is the actual use we make of time. A startling fact about our lives is the speed with which time passes, the elusiveness with which it vanishes away. Memory and anticipation link the past and the present, so we seem to be living in days

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Father Gareschè, a veteran writer and lecturer, is now directing the Sons and Daughters of Mary, Health of the Sick, two religious communities which he founded in 1952.

and weeks and years. The truth is that it is only the indivisible instant that is within our grasp.

GOOD USE OF TIME

The priest, above other men, has every incentive to use time well. He has a solemn mission, and a very urgent one, to save and to sanctify his own soul and other souls. He has a most vital message to give, the Good Tidings, the Gospel, which Christ came on earth to teach. For him, more than for other men, therefore, the use of time is vitally important.

The life of priests is, for the most part, arranged for them in its general outlines. They are given definite work to do. Most of them are assigned to a parish, and their first duty is their parish work. They have received a special training and they have safeguards and incentives which other men do not possess to be regular, systematic, and persevering in their work for souls.

But it remains, in the last analysis, for each individual priest to use the time at his disposal with energy, courage, and a definite purpose. Each priest has a vocation within a vocation, has a personal sphere of influence, a personal set of duties. Besides these he has many other opportunities for personal zeal and personal interest, outside the routine, so to say, of his professional priestly labors. He can continue his studies if he wishes. He can take up new interests, which will be a help as well as a recreation in the midst of his necessary tasks.

The first duty of a priest is to use well the time which is assigned to his duties in the parish, or the school, or wherever his superiors have placed him. But every priest has some leisure, some opportunities for personal initiative. His power of achievement, his ability to influence and help others, depend also very largely on the use he makes of what is called his "spare time" or "leisure time."

In the exercise of his priestly duties in the parish, or on the missions, or wherever he is placed by Providence, the priest can greatly improve his efficiency by putting personal enthusiasm, interest, and study into the work before him. It is not enough to do outwardly what duty requires. There is needed an interior fire an eagerness, an interest and enthusiasm which makes the priest enter into his professional work with all his heart and all his mind.

Those who have had much to do with young men who were studying other professions must have observed how differently they go at their training. Some are intent on just doing enough to get by, getting a diploma, or a certificate, passing the bar examination, or some other professional test, and then settling down to a quiet

life, which will not do very much good or very much harm. Other young professional students are full of enthusiasm about their work. They never can learn enough. They are never satisfied with what they know, they keep asking, observing, practicing, studying, putting their whole heart into their professional training: and needless to say these are the ones who afterwards, in most cases, become the leaders in their profession.

In the same way a student for the priesthood ought to be animated with a personal enthusiasm, interest, and desire to be as good a priest as may be: as learned, as holy, as competent, as skillful and able, as is possible to him. When he has become a priest, and enters into his priestly duties, he should make it a point to continue this zeal for learning, this thirst for better accomplishment. He should study while he works, observing, asking, consulting, praying also for light and guidance, not satisfied with merely accomplishing exteriorly the tasks he is given, but putting light and fire in all he does, through an interior life and interior zeal which goes along with all his outward actions.

A NEVER-ENDING TASK

Anyone who looks at the life of a priest as one of constant opportunities, of ever-increasing and valuable experiences, who considers that the priestly service he is rendering ought to make him more sympathetic, kindly, understanding, and helpful toward the people, is preparing the way for exceptional achievement as a priest. When the bishop, or superior, or whoever is entrusted with the choice of priestly workers, looks about for some one whom he can promote, to whom he can give some special tasks, his eyes are likely to fall on the man of prudence and enthusiasm, of piety and zealous fervor, and such a one will thus gain a much wider field for the qualities he has been developing.

But even if a man were left all his life in the simplest tasks of the priesthood, he would find there a world of opportunity for personal holiness and the help of his neighbor and for the defense and spread of the Church. Of course a man who enters into his priestly duties with this reasonable and prudent enthusiasm, this desire to do more and more, must also have cultivated an inner spirit of piety and prayer, or else he cannot keep up his fruitful ministry.

Sometimes there is a temptation to think that a very active and diverse life with many interests and responsibilities is a check upon prayer and the interior spirit. On the contrary these exterior actions and pre-occupations can be the very stuff of which prayer is made. The more problems a man

has, about which to speak to God, the more earnest his prayer is likely to be. The more he carries the thought of God into his work and glances, so to say, from time to time at his Heavenly Father and at his Lord Jesus, and his blessed Mother, the more he is likely to succeed in his ministry and the more he will cultivate the spirit of prayer.

LABORARE EST ORARE!

It is good and even necessary to have certain times for prayer. But these times of prayer ought to be directed towards sanctifying one's whole life and making one's thoughts turn to God. If, during the time given to prayer, the will is exercised, the memory alerted, the imagination filled with holy images then the priest can go on through the day, walking in the presence of God. No matter what distractions or vexations, trials or difficulties enter his life they are all turned to prayer, all offered to God through our Lord and the Blessed Mother, all transmuted into the Gold of Heaven, in union with the labors, the sufferings, and difficulties of Christ. Hence no priest can say that he has no time for prayer, or even that he has not enough time for prayer. "Pray always!" St. Paul says to him, and since this is commanded, it can also be accomplished, by keeping in the presence of God and by offering, from time to time, little ejaculations which will lift the heart to Heaven and our Father in Heaven.

To do these things is rather a question of courage and spiritual energy than of leisure or opportunity. It is not necessary, though helpful, when possible, to spend the time alone in church, or to retire into the quiet of one's room for meditation. Modern life being what it is, everyone who wants to live among men, to work with them, has to carry his prayer out into the world.

Some exceptional souls have a contemplative vocation. They go apart from the activities of modern life and spend their time in solitude. But the average priest has certainly no such opportunity, and

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usually has no such inclination. He likes to be among the people. He wants to work with them. He realizes the immense need that they have for him and wishes to satisfy that need. How else then can he maintain the spirit of recollection and prayer than by adapting his interior life to distractions, preoccupations, and trials. He can do this by frequently renewing his intention, by practicing ejaculatory prayers, and by lifting his mind and heart to God in those precious instants of recollection which, repeated often during the day, make his whole life a deliberate prayer.

ENEMIES OF TIME

The great obstacles to this good use of time are, of course, natural sloth and disinclination to effort. It is hard enough to go through the busy day of a priest, to answer all the calls made on one's patience and energy, to help to solve so many problems and settle so many affairs, to take care of financial matters, of the organization of the parish, to visit the sick, to bury the dead. In addition to this to make a strong and constant effort to keep one's mind united with God, to make frequent acts of recollection and fervor so that all our time may count for Heaven, requires exceptional spiritual energy. But how well worth while is the effort! We merit more by our use of time, in proportion as we cleave to God with pure love, desiring to do His will because He is so good in Himself and so worthy of all our love.

It is a thousand times worth while to pray earnestly for the grace to use time so well as to keep united with God. Because the difference between a life united with God and one lived with sloth and distractions is the difference between great holiness and spiritual mediocrity.

As a matter of fact, no man can come closer to God than the priest, and no one has more frequent reminders of God's presence and His goodness. All the work of the holy vocation is to lead men to God. He dwells near the Blessed Sacrament, and every morning he has the unspeakably great privilege of renewing the Eternal Sacrifice of Calvary. People come to him for spiritual guidance. He administers the Sacraments. The very dress he wears, indicates his consecration to Christ. Wherever he goes, he awakens in the minds of

Greetings!

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The EDITORS

men thoughts either kindly or hostile about Christ and His Church.

What is needed on the part of the priest himself, is to be alert to all these reminders. The deadly influence of routine, the custom of doing the same thing at the same time each day, familiarity with holy things, all these have to be resisted and counteracted by an interior effort which will use every moment of time with the conscious or habitual intention of living and serving God and saving souls.

These are intensely practical thoughts for everyone who wishes, as all priests must do, to be another Christ, and to gather into his own soul that holiness which he is to dispense to the people. It is hard on human nature to rise above distractions, preoccupations, difficulties, labors. But holiness is never easy, nor can we ever become Christ-like without much effort and prayer. Merely to examine his work of every day, to analyze its meaning, to ask himself with what spirit, with what effort, enthusiasm, inward ardor and outward exactness and perseverance he carries on, will mean for the priest a wonderful power to use time to the best advantage, to bring the greatest fruits to his priestly ministry and to become, what it is the vocation of all priests to become, a mighty influence for the salvation and sanctification of the people, who depend so much on us for teaching and especially for example, on how to use time well!

It is a strange fact and, to those who have the habit of criticizing others, a disconcerting fact, that in our indictment of another person we sometimes make a revelation of ourselves. For this, we need no new psychiatric explanation. Our Savior Himself anticipated the most modern technique when to those who were about to stone the woman taken in adultery, He said, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." They were going to take vengeance on someone else for a sin of which they themselves were guilty. Whenever there is an excessive zeal, a cruel determination to see that a certain law is kept and a designated penalty inflicted upon some unfortunate creature, we may suspect—what the Lord Himself knew—that the zealots for that particular law have violated the law themselves. If we find ourselves eager, even inwardly and secretly, to have a certain punishment inflicted, we had better stop for a moment to ask if our own conscience in that matter is clear.

—FROM *My Last Book,* by FR. GILLIS, C.S.P.

Self-Abuse: Challenge to Confessors (I)

JOHN C. SCHWARZ, S.J.

WHEN a French "actress" lures $4,000,000 from American pockets with a blatantly pagan film—when a malodorous novel such as "Peyton Place" finds a market of seven million customers—when a Senate investigating committee discovers that organized pornography scoops in a lush five-hundred million dollars annually—it is little wonder that the confessor must face the ravages of this trade, particularly among the young men. The incessant stimulation provided by modern life, coupled with the alert sensitivity of the male inclinations, combine to make solitary surrender to these inclinations a genuine challenge to every confessor.

Every confessor has his own notions on the most effective remedies to this problem, and pastoral courses devote careful attention to it. Perhaps, however, a brief review of some of these remedies will provide interested confessors with a basis for private reflection, agreeing or disagreeing, and mutual discussion. Such a difficult challenge is not apt to be effectively countered by guidance which has become routine, impersonal, ossifying under the undeniable impact of innumerable confessions.

The confessor's great complaint, of course, lies in his lack of time to treat this problem adequately when he is confessionally confronted with it, and this often may be a very legitimate complaint indeed. The confessor, however, whose rush is occasioned by the starting time of "Gunsmoke," or some other such offering of the "one-eyed monster," TV, might profitably re-think the matter from Christ's point of view. Rush which purchases perhaps ten or fifteen minutes added leisure time at the expense of the spiritual needs of persons slowly suffocating from a habit sufficient to damn them eternally, may prove to be re-

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Father J. C. Schwarz, already presented to our readers, is writing from the University of Detroit, Michigan, where he is teaching Theology to the undergraduates.

markably expensive leisure. Imagine a physician "too busy" to treat cancer!

Perhaps, in some instances, it is not so much sheer time that is needed, but rather interest and a personally-convinced desire to put a lad's hand into Christ's. But even where time is genuinely in short supply an approach can be developed which is both incisive and brief, but more than merely an exhortation to pray. No priest discounts prayer, but surely it was never meant to be a capsule-solution to all problems, prescribed apart from natural procedures as well.

THE STRESSING OF MOTIVES

No young man will enter the ring in the struggle for purity unless he himself is convinced of the utter necessity of doing so. The indecisive soul will last few rounds before succumbing to a too-familiar KO. The communication of motives, therefore, is of primary importance here, motives which will be personally absorbed and mastered, adding up to an absolute "must" in the penitent's life. These motives will not 'work', will not actually motivate, unless they are his own conviction. Possibly in this matter we become too concerned with *techniques* to be applied in time of temptation, while insufficiently attentive to striking the mind and will with sound, fresh motivation.

Johannes Lindworsky, S.J., in his work *The Training of the Will,* impressively expounds a theory of the human will in which will power is made one and the same with motive power. The more traditional concept wherein the will resembles a muscle, strong in some, weak in others, is rejected on the basis of clinical investigation detailed in the first section of the book. A muscle grows strong only by repeated use; so, says the traditional concept, the will also grows strong only by repeated acts. Fr. Lindworsky contends that repeated acts are valuable only insofar as they provide repeated advertence to one or another powerful motives. Scholastic psychology has always insisted that the will is a faculty dependent on the intellect, the *voluntas rationalis.* Perhaps it will be practical to stress more the *rationalis* in attempting to assist penitents disturbed by solitary sin. The will power is there, although sadly dormant in some instances, and divine grace most assuredly stands ready. Yet few individuals seem at all convinced that such strength is at their command; heavy discouragement rests on the vague assumption that "I just have a weak will, that's all." Rather, weak motives, or really even none at all. Powerful effort will demand powerful motivation much as modern missilry demands tremendous power before distant spaces can be con-

quered. A sputtering one-cylinder engine will fail even to budge an Atlas missile from its Canaveral site.

Perhaps in the brief minutes which the busy confessor can spare for the troubled penitent, some motives can be proposed. If a lad be old enough to think for himself in any degree, possibly he can be induced to put in some private thinking 'on his own' about this vital matter. The confessor cannot do this thinking for him, even if he had hours available. But a confessor may possibly succeed in confronting him with motives for later pondering. At least, he can try.

A person might be inducted to sit down by himself, at home or in church, for, say, ten minutes a day every day for a week. He puts aside the papers and TV; no one else need know what he's thinking over. For ten minutes or so he tries to "think this thing through," and the confessor may propose some motives for the young man to consider.

If the confessor can succeed in this he is accomplishing at least two results: (1) the penitent will not be merely listening to someone tell him what his conduct should be and not be. Rather, he makes some effort, however amateurish, to develop his own personal convictions in the matter, to absorb these motives into his own personal pattern of action. (2) His thinking processes present Almighty God with further opportunity to move the soul with His divine grace and inspirations. The person is, so to speak, opening himself to the divine influence, at least somewhat.

MOST POWERFUL MOTIVES

What motives can be proposed? Every confessor will have his own views, his own opinion concerning the motives which to him seem most powerful. These are the motives he will present best. Perhaps the following can be considered:

(1) *Personal maturity.* No young man can ever truly become "grown up" until he can take charge of his own urges and impulses. Even so-called adults who have no self-control are really no more than children in this respect, for it is characteristic of the child to be dominated by his wants. If one does not learn to take charge now, it will be doubly difficult, bordering on the impossible, in later years.

(2) *Parallel between purity and courage.* An example here may be of assistance: a G.I. in combat sees a buddy out there wounded on the field. He thinks to himself, "If I don't go out and get him, he'll die for certain. He has a wife and family. If I was out there I'd certainly want someone to bring me in." Then his thoughts switch: "If I go out there maybe I'll get hit,

or killed. I might get crippled for life." Then he decides; he's over the edge of his foxhole, on the way to get his buddy. What has he done? He has said "No" to his feelings, his fears, the terrible tightness in his stomach; he has followed what his mind pointed out to him, instead of following his feelings. That's courage, admired by all. Purity is very similar, for in purity too a person has that inner strength to say "No" to his own cravings and impulses, following instead what his mind points out.

(3) *Peace of mind.* The ache of a pounding conscience never finds true relief so long as these bodily inclinations remain out of control. Self-respect collapses. Every young man knows that "sooner or later" he must win this battle; why not be smart and make it sooner, right now.

(4) *Makes a person misjudge the opposite sex, marriage, and love.* Becoming addicted to this habit causes the mind to be absorbed more and more and more with one's own desires. Bodily sensations become the main goal of existence, perhaps, and the opposite sex can be regarded only as so many objects related to one's own excitement. Even love comes to be confused with these physical processes. Surely many a marriage failure, therefore, must begin in this initial failure to understand

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that the strictly physical elements of sex are only one fraction of the many-sided cooperation needed between boy and girl, between husband and wife.

(5) *Salvation.* This, of course, is objectively the major motive of all although many a confessor, counselor, and preacher as well has found that what is highest *objectively* does not necessarily carry the greatest impact *subjectively.* The confessor strives to correct the seeming indifference of some penitents to the ultimate consequence of certain lines of conduct, but perhaps it is advisable to bolster this supreme motive with natural motives as well.

(6) *The friendship of Christ.* Fundamentally he who is in mortal sin feels alone, placing himself in true solitary confinement. The only exit is labeled: repentance and confession. This leads back to Him Who really is the only enduring friend of the soul. In this day of social groups, clubs, teams, even gangs, the motive of personal

union with Christ can be presented strongly.

The foregoing motives are only sketched here since every priest understands them and can readily expand them as he sees fit, adding or subtracting to them. They can be presented concisely to a penitent if they have been at least generally formulated beforehand.

The noted spiritual authority, Fr. Edward Leen wrote:

"We fail, not because our wills are irresolute or our passions strong—but because we allow our intelligence to be obscured as to the meaning and purpose of life. It is not so much our will that is at fault as our intelligence." *

He was not referring, of course, to the present topic but his words nevertheless reflect the same thesis which is proposed here. Even with young, unformed minds, basic misunderstandings will lead very often to basic aberrations in moral conduct. The efforts to assist in the guidance of a life, young or not-so-young, which at present wavers often and falls often will have a solid psychological foundation if at least some attention be devoted to establishing sound motives. This alone most assuredly will not remedy self-abuse, yet it may contribute substantially, for here is suggested calm, extended activity on the part of the penitent. If all true education is self-education then perhaps all true reform is ultimately self-reform. Every confessor knows he possesses no means whereby he can *compel* a reform.

In a subsequent paper some further considerations on the same topic will be suggested in hopes of providing confessors with a basis for reflection, agreement or disagreement, and discussion—for this serious confessional challenge will again be met by each one.

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* Edward Leen, *In the Likeness of Christ*, Sheed & Ward, London, 1936, page 223.

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The world instinctively mourns the passing of the great, whether it be a statesman, a scientist, or a humanitarian.

Pope Pius XII was surely among the great. A man of prodigious activity, even up to his last hours; a man of intimate prayer—a life lived up to its last siege for the welfare of a world engulfed in strife and tottering near the brink of catastrophe.

His heart ached for the miseries of his children, many of whom pray for him in walled-in silence of Communism's darkness. His numerous encyclicals are monuments to his keen insight into the needs of his times and to the application of the remedies of ageless Christianity to the many changing and perplexing problems of his era.

Pius XII is mourned not only by those who knew of his qualities of leadership in the capitals of the world, but by the millions of simple folk to whom he was simply the Holy Father. A remarkable linguist, he spoke to almost every national group at his audiences in their native tongue; in him, one could see almost personified the Universality of the Church. And how he loved the people! Although he walked among kings and the heads of nations, he was always the People's Pope, the Father of Christendom—his monument is in their hearts.

It is said of all men that their deeds live after them. Although he will no longer greet the throngs from the balcony of St. Peter's, and another's hand will be at the helm of the Church, still the life that he lived and the spirit that was his will continue to uplift the hearts of men and whenever the name of Pius XII is mentioned, they will pause for a moment in reverent remembrance of a priest who lived for God and died for his people.

Reform of the Breviary

Louis G. Miller, C.Ss.R.

PRIESTS generally are aware of the fact that the Divine Office is going through a period of readjustment and reform. Just a few years ago the general decree "On Restoring the Rubrics to a Simpler Form" made significant changes. At the same time, the decree pointed out that the changes were merely provisional: *"Interim . . . donec aliter provisum fuerit."*

Naturally, a certain curiosity is sometimes experienced and expressed among priests as to what these future changes will envisage. There is of course no way of knowing the particulars of these changes, but there is available good and solid evidence as to their general direction. This is to be found in an address by His Eminence, Giacomo Cardinal Lercaro at the First International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy, which was held at Assisi in September, 1956. Cardinal Lercaro is archbishop of Bologna, and is noted for his vigorous efforts to advance the cause of social reform and at the same time to encourage in his people a greater knowledge and love of the liturgy.

Cardinal Lercaro's address was entitled: "The Simplification of the Rubrics and the Breviary Reform." In the first part he discussed at some length the motives behind the changes in the Breviary brought about by the recent decree. A chief motive seems to have been the desire to ease the burden of busy pastors. The very first words of the decree point this up: "In our time, priests, especially those who have the care of souls, are increasingly burdened with new and varied tasks: for this reason they find it difficult to attend to the recitation of the Divine Office with the necessary composure."

It appears to have been the mind of the Commission entrusted with the Breviary reform that a drastic and radical simplification and consequent shortening of the Office was called for. But this

Father Louis Miller, C.Ss.R., is one of the Four well-known Redemptorist brothers editing the LIGUORIAN and the LIGUORIAN PAMPHLETS.

would take a long period of study and consultation. At the same time the circumstances of the age seemed to call for immediate action. What the Commission did, therefore, was to agree on certain provisional reforms in those particulars where the need seemed most evident, while at the same time making it clear that their conclusions were by no means to be considered as final and definitive.

Nevertheless, as Cardinal Lercaro states, it is surely possible from this interim reform to gather certain indications of the lines on which the definitive reform will run.

Here, we might raise the question which is often asked by priests of our acquaintance: *Is there any possibility that permission may be granted for priests to pray the Office in English?* Cardinal Lercaro in his address does not touch upon the point. If the use of the vernacular had been seriously thought of by the Commission, he surely would have mentioned it in some way. Certain concessions have been made in this matter (as all priests know) in regard to the *Rituale*, and even to a limited degree and in certain special areas in regard to the Mass liturgy. But as to the Breviary there seems to be no indication at the present time that the authorities are contemplating a change for priests in this matter of language.

Here are the lines along which (according to Cardinal Lercaro) the future reform of the Breviary is being planned.

1. A rehabilitation of the "temporal" cycle, with the consequent reduction of the number and the rite of the feasts of the "sanctoral" cycle. Some indication of this trend can be seen in the change already made, by which various semi-duplex feasts have been reduced to a simplex status, and simplex feasts have become mere commemorations.

2. A rehabilitation of the psalter as the fundamental element of the Office. The idea here is to ensure the periodic recitation of the entire psalter. This is reflected in the change already made by which the priest is directed on certain feasts to use for the Little Hours the ferial rather than the festive psalms.

3. A rehabilitation of the lessons and of their didactic and formative purpose. A searching study is in progress in this area, which has to do with the choice, number, distribution and length of the lessons. Surely the cardinal echoed the thought of most priests when he said quite frankly: "Certainly a better selection, above all for the lessons of the Old Testament and of the patristic writings, is something to be hoped for."

Interesting is the speculation of the cardinal that in the future reform Matins and Lauds may be

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directly connected with the busy pastor's morning meditation. In this plan the lessons of Matins might provide him with the actual food for thought, and Lauds its concluding affections. It is true that there is an ascetical tradition opposing this doubling or "telescoping of obligations," but, the cardinal asks, need there be such a war between these two means of reaching out towards God? Such a plan, of course, envisages Matins and Lauds as being said not in an unthinking and formalistic way (as only too often, alas, is the case), but devoutly, reverently, with time for the mind to ponder the truths contained.

Cardinal Lercaro suggests also that at Vespers (to be said in the evening; again an appropriate time for meditation) the capitulum might well be lengthened out into a lesson of moderate length, chosen opportunely for the instruction and formation of the priest—and of the people, whose attendance at Vespers he hopes thus might be stimulated.

4. Elimination of adventitious elements and re-establishment of a simpler and more logical structure for each of the Hours.

Evidently what Cardinal Lercaro refers to here is the reform of the hours so that the elements particularly designed for choir recitation might be adjusted for the pastor who says the office necessarily by himself. Much was done along these lines in the previous reform; much remains to be done and doubtless will be done in time to come.

We have been able to select only a few of the points touched on by Cardinal Lercaro in his remarkable address at the Assisi Congress. His full address can be found, for those who may be interested, in The Assisi Papers, published by the Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn. In this volume are to be found the other chief addresses of the celebrated Conference, with the concluding allocution of the Holy Father.

The Nativity from the Cardinal's Pulpit: St. Robert Bellarmine

JEROME B. COLL, S.J.

THE reputation of St. Robert Bellarmine as an outstanding theologian momentarily began to disappear with the termination of European monarchies at the beginning of the twentieth century. The defender of the temporal power of the Holy Father found fewer critics and non-Catholic opponents once the Vatican Council ceased making the headlines in newspapers throughout the Christian world. In 1930, however, with Bellarmine's canonization tribute was paid once again to this Doctor of the Church who in his masterful *De Controversiis Fidei Christianae* had thrown up a strong wall against the tide of Luther and Calvin.

The English speaking world has long been unaware, however, of the great orator that Bellarmine showed himself to be in more than a hundred sermons which he himself approved for publication. History attests to the fact that the Theological Faculty of Louvain held Bellarmine in high esteem for his polished oratory. They praised the highly dogmatic content of his sermons. But this great theologian did not forget his role as teacher, pastor, and guide of the simple faithful. The frequent stress of practical rules of life leave the listener with the realization that the glorious truths of the mysteries of Christianity must be immediately put into practice.

The following pages are an attempt to capture the fire of this preacher from one of his many sermons on the Nativity and Incarnation. It is hoped that both an insight into Bellarmine's power of handling this central dogma of faith, as well as an appreciation for his gentle consideration of the

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infant strength in the largesse of the Son of God will provide the reader with sermon material for fruitful seasonal reflection. A generous sampling has been made *verbatim* of Bellarmine's own expression. A close paraphrase of his thought occupies the remainder of this paper, except in a few transitional sentences and in the concluding paragraph, wherein are stated the reflections of the writer. The translation of Bellarmine is my own. [1]

Bellarmine employs for his theme and text the words of St. Paul. "For the grace of God our Savior has appeared to all men, instructing us, in order that rejecting ungodliness and worldly lusts, we may live temperately and justly and piously in this world." (Titus 2, 11-12)

The introductory words of Bellarmine set the feast of the Nativity in the proper significance of the liturgical year. "So great is the splendor and magnificence of today's solemnity . . . that as a very bright light the Nativity easily casts into shadow the other feasts of the year. Not only does it captivate our hearts and all our attention, but also it lays claim upon our prayers and reflections allowing nothing else to enter our minds or sit upon our lips. To celebrate properly, therefore, this especially solemn feast . . . we offer to the Son of God born for us today, no bouquet of flowers, but rather a garland and crown woven from words."

Today, most significantly, we call "our Savior," "our Liberator" because today he has initiated our emancipation from the misfortunes and tragedies that make up our life. This day our Savior has brought the grace of God down to man. Bellarmine explains that the grace of God has a double meaning here: "primarily the kind and gentle love of God for man." "Our every favor depends upon the love of God . . . especially upon that unique gift by which we become justified . . . in His eyes." This grace which is in God Himself manifests itself to us in deeds. Although He has loved us from eternity, now in the new-born Savior not only do we see this affection, but as it were we can reach out and touch it; for He sent His own Son into the world. Today as it were God first comes to know poverty, cold, weakness. "The love and kindness with which God has favored us . . . who does not touch it with his own hands? What else does the stable, the manger, the hunger and poverty mean . . ." except that the grace and love of God have appeared to man.

Man has not realized the rare value of this gift of grace; men never knew how high was our ran-

(1) St. Robert Bellarmine, *Opera Omnia*, Vol. V: "Conciones" (Concio X: "De Nativitate Domini"), Naples, 1861 according to the Venice edition of 1617.

som. But today, unless he deliberately shuts his eyes, everyone can estimate the value in some small way. "For why did God wish to be born in a stable? Why did he wish to die on a cross unless to buy back that priceless jewel which you sold with the greatest facility?" So great is the value of grace that it set divine love in motion. God saw the weakened condition of our slavery and initiated our freedom by being born among us.

INFINITE VALUE OF LOVE

There were no bounds to this love. The grace of our Savior could not be contained by the narrow limits of our human nature; rather, it is as a living fountain leaping up into Paradise. The grace and love of God from this day forth is for every man.

With recurrent flashes of brilliant rhetoric Bellarmine frequently employs the imaginative genius of the psalmist who painted God and His gifts in the bright imagery of sunlight and life-giving water. Our skilled preacher, whose interpretations of the Psalms fill at least one large volume, becomes almost poetic. The grace of God is like a fountain of water; the grace of God is like the shining sun—the sun shines everywhere, even to those who deliberately shut their eyes against it, even to the blind. The light—the grace of God—is there.

Man then must love in return. St. Paul tells us how to love: by casting off ungodliness and worldly desires. Religious apathy diverts us from the things of God, and then self-indulgent lusts attract us to creatures. If we follow the instruction of this Apostle then we fulfill every law by loving God, neighbor and ourselves as we ought; this is accomplished when we live as men devoted to God, just to our neighbor and temperate in our own actions.

But the force and magnetism of sin are stressed by Bellarmine with the same powerful imagination. This worldly longing within us is, as it were, an "extremely swift-flowing river" which catches hold of a man and drowns in him the Spirit of God. Therefore, we must desire and pray for this *pietas*, this gift of the Holy Spirit by which we worship God as a Father. This gift, if we learn the lesson of the Nativity, will insure us of victory in our struggle against the strong tide of creatures. "Then let us put an end to our folly and listen to the wisdom of our Infant who was born among men for no other reason than to teach us to forgo ungodliness and worldly longings."

POSITIVE COURSE OF ACTION

Psychologically sound, Bellarmines' rhetoric suggests a positive course of action. Sin must be

wiped out, yes; but avoiding evil is less than half our obligation. The grace of God calls for supernatural activity on our part. Finally, we must lead holy lives in this world. It is not sufficient to be a just man. From our hearts we must be sincerely attracted towards our God as towards a loving Father, and with happiness and joy, lovingly and anxiously seek after the things of God.

Especially are we urged by St. Paul to "look forward, blessed in our hope, to the day when there will be a new dawn of glory . . ." Bellarmine comments, "Nothing stronger can be found to free a man from the shackles of worldly attractions than the continual reflection upon our heavenly beatitude."

St. Paul is unable to find the proper words to explain this hope of our future glory and the glory of God. Bellarmine adds, "No one can mark the infinite value of this gift which here on earth cannot be seen, explained, or understood, but can only be believed and desired. 'The glorious coming of the great God,' what strength and majesty are in these words. They cannot be explained, but only highly esteemed."

Here, Bellarmine agrees, is our most powerful remedy against the attractions of the material world surrounding us. The hope of future glory focuses our attention, gives us a frame of reference for the infinite goodness of God in loving us. Some day men will come face to face with this loving God; but today we have the same God instructing us from a crib. If we follow Christ through life, He will accompany us into heaven. We begin our journey today.

Everyone is disarmed by a newborn baby. How much easier, then, for us to look at this Infant. "How gratifying to gaze upon God . . . Certainly in no way does it seem difficult to cast off religious apathy and worldly attractions . . . and to live a life of holiness. Here is the brief sermon which today the infant Son of God preaches to us."

"Let us kneel, then, for a short time at the cave of Bethlehem. There we shall behold a new Solomon preaching in an unexpected manner from a manger as from a cathedral, and in a way far wiser and more penetrating than any philosopher . . . How unfortunate he is who does not heed this sermon and does not listen to this most profound instructor!"

HE PREACHES BY EXAMPLE

For a helpless infant to preach a significant sermon is a paradox that caught the attention of preachers since patristic times. Bellarmine's agreement that example is a better teacher than empty words allows him to consider this Infant as a preacher. How can an infant

preach to us, teach us, you ask? He reaches us by example. "Does he not speak loudly for you to live honestly . . . for you to live justly, when He Himself before His birth journeyed with His Mother to fulfill the command of Augustus? Does he not warn you clearly enough to live a holy life when devotion to His Father brought about His birth, His suffering, His death?"

Christ became man to help man. In the words of St. Augustine, "Why then did God become man if man will not be improved?" ("*Cur igitur Deus homo, si non corrigitur homo?*") Bellarmine momentarily draws upon a key meditation from the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius, as he encourages us to follow Christ as King and Leader. Bellarmine adds "Christ has often watched men as though they were insane, rushing on towards Hell. Overcome with pity He came down from heaven to show us a better way through life by becoming our leader. How blind and foolish is man—deserting Christ he turns to follow the devil and the world."

Bellarmine returns to the theme of paternal love of God. If a father were to see his sons running headlong into a trap, would he not, overcome by grief, run in among them to warn them of the danger and of the death that awaits them? "Christ today has come into our midst—an infant as a Father to warn us of the impending danger. How foolish, then, not to heed the warning of God. In a loud voice God calls out, 'Believe me, my sons, you are running into a trap, towards a snare, pushing on towards death.' And thus He has shouted so that afterwards He says, 'My throat is hoarse from shouting.' Today the tale is much the same . . . stupidly, foolishly we pay no attention. Why did God become man, if not to be improved."

Many there are who will not follow this Infant King, though they allow outstanding personalities—worldly leaders—to set the fashions in their own lives. Why then did God become man? Surely the birth of Christ, which teaches clearly a lesson for all, is somehow set for the ruin of many.

For those who learn the lesson of Bethlehem, for those who listen to this sermon from the crib, there is joy, happiness and glory forever.

This stimulating force of Bellarmine's rhetoric must have left his audience in a somewhat weakened, humbled state. To hope for a transfer of his power into these sketchy clippings is somewhat beyond expectation. However, the wealth of thought coupled with his genius for expression, taken together, form one valid cause for assigning Bellarmine to a lofty rank among the great Catholic orators.

Mental Disorders and Sanctity

WE should like to restrict ourselves to merely listing the basic principles concerned with mental illness and sanctity, as given by Father Jordan Aumann, O.P.

1) In all discussions pertaining to mental maladies and sanctity it is necessary to bear in mind that "neither the theologian nor the psychiatrist are authorized to draw any scientific conclusions from one simple observation and classification of extraordinary phenomena."

2) Mystical phenomena, per se, do not constitute proof of sanctity. (The saints have not been canonized on account of extraordinary phenomena verified in their lives, but for their heroic virtues).

3) From the concept of Christian perfection it can be deduced that "sanctity requires a complete and balanced personality as a foundation." (Christian virtues, especially the moral ones, imply as well as preserve the sanctity and equilibrium of personality. Under this aspect holiness and equilibrium are correlative terms).

4) Is Christian perfection compatible with mental disorders?—At first sight it would seem that if the mental disorder is a real sickness, a Christian could become a saint in spite of it or even by means of it. Certainly, it would seem to be too strict a doctrine to exclude from perfection and sanctity those who, through no personal fault, are afflicted with mental illness.

5) How are we then to explain the fact that in the lives of certain saints there seems to be evidence of pathological phenomena?—"Since the human body reacts to stimuli only in a limited number of ways, it follows that the phenomena observed in a mystic or a neurotic may be materially the same. For this reason it would not be scientifically exact to conclude that some saints have been subject to neuroses simply because certain phenomena in their life seem to be pathological. Rather, it is necessary to adhere to the general principle that phenomena which proceed from a pathological state are purely pathological, just as phenomena that proceed from a mystical state postulate a supernatural cause."

6) Is it possible that certain phenomena, truly pathological, have been verified in the life of a saint before having entered the mystical state?—Saints were not born perfect, and therefore it is admissible that they may have had pathological disorders during a certain period of their life. However, it is not possible that they entered into the mystical state and attained holiness before having been completely cured of such illness. Genuine pathological phenomena are incompatible with the mystical state and Christian perfection.

7) A mental sickness that renders the Christian incapable of submitting his will as well as his inferior faculties to the control of reason makes him incapable of attaining natural perfection, which is the basis of supernatural Christian perfection. The mystical state implies the harmonious development of personality by means of the virtues, and complete submission to the will of God.

T. J. V.

FAMILY COMMUNION CRUSADE

What is the Family Communion Crusade?

A lay movement, inaugurated with episcopal permission, to enhance family sanctity.

Its aims?

1. Family group Communion, at least once a month.
2. Imitation and veneration of the Holy Family of Nazareth.
3. Celebration of the Feast of the Holy Family as international "Family Day," by family group Communion and consecration of the family to the Holy Family.

Any dues?

None. No solicitation of any sort.

Meetings?

None.

Who may become participants of the Crusade?

Any family, portion of a family or individual desirous of bringing Christ into the home through family Communion and devotion to the Holy family.

How can further information be obtained?

By addressing Family Communion Crusade, Barre, Massachusetts, for free literature. Leaflets are available in many languages.

quid in casu?

WILLIAM F. ALLEN, J.C.D.

Do you know anything about partial funerals? *It is claimed in some quarters that, in cases where ecclesiastical burial is to be refused according to the Code, the priest may conduct what is termed "partial funeral." This would include: recitation of the Rosary at the home or at the funeral parlor, prayers over the body at the door of the church and prayers at the graveside. Sometimes, a Mass would be given at an unusual hour with only the relatives and close friends present. The proponents of such "partial funerals" have their procedure on three premises:* first, *partial funeral is not ecclesiastical burial in the sense of the Code and therefore not forbidden by the Code.* Secondly, *no scandal is given because there is little or no publicity;* thirdly, *because of the feelings of American Catholics about funerals, scandal (in the sense of stumbling block) would be given through the refusal of any funeral services, liturgical or non-liturgical. Do you know anything about this matter?*

I am convinced that the above "partial funeral" is anti-canonical, to say the least. What is Christian burial according to the Code? Canon 1204 tells us that it consists in three elements: the transfer of the body to the church, the performance in the church of the funeral liturgy and then the interment. The essential element of Christian burial today is the funeral rites, whereas before the Code the emphasis was burial in blessed ground. Canon 1215 tells us that unless there is a serious reason excusing thereof, these three elements are to make up Christian burial. Canon 1231 directs us to accompany the body to the cemetery and there to inter it according to the rubrics to be found in the liturgical books. According to Canon 1239 every baptized person has a right to Christian burial as set forth in the above canons, unless the law deprives him expressly of that right. (Canon 1240 enumerates those to be deprived of that right). Canon 1241 reminds us that if Christian burial is denied, then the funeral Mass and all other public burial services are to be denied.

From all of the above we deduce that first, there is only *ONE* manner of Christian burial recognized by the Church *officially*. Canon

1257 informs us that it belongs exclusively to the Holy See to approve of forms of sacred liturgy and of liturgical books. If the "partial funeral" is not in approved books of liturgy, then, it does not officially exist for the Church. Yet, when priests participate in such a "partial funeral" they are involving the Church in a rite not approved of by the Church. Surely, when a public Mass is said (with relatives and friends present by invitation at an hour specified to them officially; when the body is even present; when the body is met at the door of the church and prayers said at the door of the church) all this appears official on the part of the Church, but according to what approved liturgical book? and by whose authority? Besides, the modus violates Canon 1241 if we are to deny Christian burial to a person, we deny it in its totality or not at all.

It seems to me that this "partial funeral" is something that has been invented to take the sting out of deprivation of Christian burial. As the query states, it is an attempt to ward off the scandal given to the people by such a refusal and scandal in the sense that the people thus angered will be driven from the Church and die without the priest. We cannot but sympathize with the sollicitude of the priests to hold their people. We hope that the Ordinaries have knowledge of such procedures and will, no doubt, take counsel with the Holy See on the point. We hope too, that Canon 1240 is well understood, namely, that only sinners public and manifest (notorious sinners) are to be deprived of Christian burial. A notorious sinner is one "who is popularly believed to have known that he was breaking the law and to have chosen freely to do so." (cf. *Jurist*, July 1955 p. 261). It is this element of inexcusability that differentiates a notorious crime from a merely public one. Lastly, we so hope that Canon 1240, n. 2 is applied too; namely, that in cases of doubt the favor of the law should go to the deceased since he is in no position to defend himself from the accusation of having committed a canonical crime and that the law is penal in nature. From a consideration of all these elements, the refusal of Christian burial will not be as frequent as is implied in the question. Rather than invent new liturgical forms, let us apply diligently but equitably the Law.

★

Is the priest promoting dances if at the request of a parish organization he publishes in the parish bulletin or announces from the pulpit that the organization will have a dance on such a date and place?

No: the decree of the Consistorial in 1917 made synonymous promote and sponsor; in the above someone else is sponsoring the dance. The decree however forbade the priest to attend the dance sponsored by another! (cf. Bouscaren vol. I, p. 137).

In suggestions offered for enlarging attendance of public school children at Confraternity of Chris-

tian Doctrine gatherings one is to have dancing after the lecture. Is the priest promoting dances if he tells the teachers to have dancing or tells the students after the lecture they may now dance? May he start the juke box or supply the phonograph records?

The Consistorial's purpose in the 1917 decree was to forbid things not consonant with priestly conduct and discipline. Dancing seemed at that time to be out of the realm of the priest. How times have changed! Now, the CCD runs socials in almost every diocese! and the priest is the power behind the throne. I do not think the priest mentioned in the query violates the spirit of the 1917 decree: today the priest remains in the background and lets the children have a good time and sees to it that they are chaperoned . . . He is perhaps there to maintain good order. But he is not the master of ceremonies; it is not 'his' dance, his project. He is not mixed up in the affair as a promoter.

If the Sisters have ballroom dancing as part of the curriculum, has the pastor any obligation to interfere?

Why should he? There is nothing wrong with the ballroom type of dancing; it has recreational and esthetic values. The decree said 'non decet' to have a priest mixed up actively in such a profane, mundane matter—that was all. It was not a condemnation of dancing.

May the pastor purchase a juke box knowing full well that it will be used for dancing?

Dancing was not forbidden nor is it forbidden in se. In most cases it is not an occasion of sin. So the pastor can put at the disposal of his parishioners a juke box just as he can put out for their use a deck of cards, etc. There is no law against it; it is not bad in se.

If the grade or high school pupils are putting on a play in which dancing is featured can this be published from the pulpit or in the parish bulletin?

Why not? Dancing is an art and an accomplishment.

Does the dancing decree pertain to folk dancing, reels, boys and girls skating together?

The decree that I read had nothing to do with dancing in itself. It had something to say only about priests being mixed up in dances as the promotors, sponsors of such mundane affairs.

★

The stipend for a low Mass in our diocese is one dollar. Is one justified in telling a parishioner that the stipend is five dollars if he requests a low Mass on a definite Sunday or at a definite time?

Yes, if there has been some justified means used to fix the taxa for a Mass said at a fixed time or a special day. In most dioceses, custom and sometimes the Bishop decrees that a Sunday Mass brings

with it a higher stipend; likewise, an announced Mass brings the same. But, the stipend must be set by an authority explicitly or implicitly; it cannot be set by the priest himself unless he would ask an offering not for the Mass but because of some extrinsic title—the inconvenience, the late hour etc. and let it be thus understood by the parishioner: (Canons 831, 824 n.2)

★

Regarding a child under 7 years old who dies: is there a sub gravi obligation on the part of the priest or the parents to have a funeral Mass (Missa de Angelis) or say some liturgical prayers? Is the priest obliged sub gravi to go to the cemetery in these cases?

Under Can. 1209 n.3 we are told that in Catholic cemeteries there should be a place of burial apart for the bodies of little children 'infantium corpuscula'. Canon 1203 tells us that the bodies of the faithful are to be buried and not cremated, and Can. 1215 gives the procedure for Christian burial for all the faithful. From all these canons we can reason that the little children baptized are of the faithful and must receive the consideration accorded by the Church to the faithful. Regatillo *Institutiones Juris Canonici II, p.* 63 remarks that the funeral services of children do not include the Mass. The word parvulorum applies to children under seven. The same author very justly remarks that funeral services are accorded of public law and while the person through his own testament or through his family may forego willingly the pomp of such funeral services, no one can forego them altogether. Thus, the body should be brought to the church, there should be prayers modo liturgico, then burial by a priest in a blessed grave. Is all this imposed sub gravi? There should be a serious reason for denying or omitting the due process of burial for a baptized Catholic child. The various steps in it may be dispensed with for a good reason: if there were too many funerals on the same day, or if the cemetery were too far away, etc. the priest could be dispensed from accompanying the body. However, there should be a serious reason excusing the priest and the family from following the law in regard to burial for infants particularly those who have had the use of reason or who approached that age.

★

Is there any sub gravi prohibition regarding the holding of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in the morning? We have a bad neighborhood and only a handful would attend in the evening or the afternoon—a larger congregation would be present therefore in the morning.

I have never run across any such prohibition. I have failed to find it noted in any books on Liturgy. I have heard it expressed and a frown cast upon it if it follows immediately the Holy Sacrifice of

the Mass as if there was opposition of concepts between the two: the Sacrifice, the immolation at the Mass and in the Benediction the adoration of the Glorified Christ. But, is this basically true or only opposition in human appreciation? For Forty Hours we have the Mass and the exposition at the end of it. Unless someone holds more information on this point let us agree that your reason for having Benediction is more than sufficient. Some liturgists of pure alloy may wince but it seems permissible.

★

On the occasion of a Baptism or wedding when a person hands an offering saying, "this is for the church" may one presume it is a stole fee?

Yes, unless the offering exceeds greatly the stole fee set by the diocese. The Ordinary has decreed that monies received on the occasion of a funeral or a wedding or a baptism are stole fees and the individual has not the right to countermand that unless he first fulfills his duty on that score. The excess might be for the Church unless the donor meant to do a special favor for the officiant.

★

When a priest assists another in distributing Holy Communion but has no altar boy to hold the paten for him, is he sinning by so acting?

We presume that the inquirer has the communicant, each one hold the paten for himself; otherwise it would be sinful to distribute Holy Communion and not use a paten; he would expose the Blessed Sacrament to unbecoming risks in that Sacred Particles might drop to the floor and be not traceable.

We must advert to this fact: the faithful, in the mind of the Church should always hold the paten for themselves. (cf. S.C. of the Sacraments Mar. 26, 1929. Bouscaren I, p. 366). However, the same Congregation replied, when asked if an altar boy could do this, that yes, it was not forbidden by the former decree providing it was done with care (cf. Boucaren II, p. 193).

★

What amount of food is necessary to make a person sin gravely who would eat between meals on a fast day?

Jorio would give as a rule: whatever added to the evening meal on a fast day would be equivalent to a full evening meal; the addition should be of solid food and not things which are more or less water or juice such as grapes, fruits etc. Or, half of an evening meal would be serious matter. Since the Bishops of our country have adopted the relative norm for determining the law of fast i.e. whatever is needed for each individual to do his work, maintain his health, etc.—that is allowed in a fast day, it is not an easy task to condemn a person to serious sin. How many girls take but toast and coffee for breakfast and a sandwich and tea for lunch! and by four P.M. are so famished that they feel the need of more nourishment! Is

this snack superfluous or necessary food for them? Or if they go out at night to a meeting, who could deny them a cup of coffee and a sandwich sub gravi if they have 'picked' only at their food all the day at meals? Our mode of eating today, particularly among the young women, ill fits our concept of the rules of fast.

★

Could it safely be said that a priest can overlook the decrees of the Holy See and the Council of Baltimore and imitate his good confreres in putting on dances for the benefit of the Church?

The Sacred Congregation did not want the priest to promote or sponsor the dance because it judged it not proper for the priest to be mixed up in such mundane and occasions of sin; it hinted that others could sponsor them on church property for it forbade the priest to attend them, even in that case. The Council of Baltimore reechoed that same thought. Today, the priest rarely puts them on, sponsors them; it is a committee of the Sodality that publicly takes such responsibility—so that clears the priest at least of the word of the prohibition; secondly, it, the dance is rarely approved of by the priest for the benefit of the church directly. Most of the time, he is using a dance to give social outlets to the youth of the parish, to protect them from night clubs etc. and indirectly he may derive benefit from the proceeds. Can he be condemned in these modern days?

In the South there are many places which have a white parish next to a parish for the colored. The white priest is the territorial pastor; the priest in the colored church is for the colored people—hence a personal pastor. Some of these colored divisions are not canonically erected; is such a priest held to say the Missa pro populo? What if he performed a marriage between two white people in his church? would it be valid? What if the priest of the white parish married two colored people?

We must agree on one point: it seems to me that both parishes exist side by side and are coextensive and both pastors are territorial pastors. One pastor's flock is determined by racial qualities. All within a certain territory of that race belong to him. His jurisdiction however is not limited to that people exclusively like the Army chaplain to his personnel on the army base. In his parish he may validly marry anyone, even though they are not his parishioners. His jurisdiction is tied to his territory and not to people.

If the colored parish is not truly a parish in the eyes of the Ordinary but only a mission (quite independent of its mother-church), then the rector is not held to the Missa pro populo. However, many of these units started out as an experiment and grew into parishes with the passing of time and after considerable missionary activity. They, in the mind of the Ordinary, acquired the status of a parish

without a formal decree of erection. It would be well to consult the Chancery as to the existence of the obligation of the Mass.

★

It has always puzzled me why in the 'Communicantes' we associate the Sacrifice of Christ with the merits and intercession of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints.

We do call upon the Saints to unite with us in the offering of the Sacrifice of Christ. We do not add anything thereby to the Mass nor to Christ's merits, since they are in themselves infinite in value. But the Mass today, the Sacrifice of Calvary today, is in a sense more than the Sacrifice of Calvary—it is the offering, the sacrifice of the Mystical Body. It is Christ offered by the Church and pleading for the application of the merits of Calvary, hic et nunc. To avail itself of this application, the Mystical Body presents to God its sentiments of adoration, love, gratitude, and expiation. These sentiments must be acceptable to God since the Church is the Spouse of Christ. However, the sanctity of the Spouse varies since it depends in final analysis on the sanctity of its actual members. Consequently from the viewpoint of the Church, the priest celebrant, the participants, the accidental value of the Mass can be very limited. It is susceptible of increase in this aspect by the intercession of the Blessed Mother and the Saints; it can be made more acceptable to God by their intercession since they may obtain from God the grace to make us progress more in holiness and in praiseworthy sentiments before God and thus make our Sacrifice more pleasing to Him. Our invocation of the Saints during Mass should thus be interpreted.

★

All commentators of Canon 1181 seem to say that the law forbids taking any money at the door of the church for sacred functions and that any contrary custom is to be rejected. Does this apply to our custom of taking seat money?

Your query about taking money at the door of the church on the occasion of church services does violate the spirit of the canon and perhaps the letter of Can. 1181. However, commentators remark too, that this canon does not forbid the taking of money for the use of seats provided, while those, who do not wish to pay, find accomodations inside. Rome sanctions the principle that if you use a seat, it is only right that you pay for it; but for the entrance into a church or for participation in a service, nothing can be exacted. Our system seems questionable in that it embarasses people into paying and begrudgingly permits the non payers to enter! Pastors of yesterday used to collect the pew rent during the service. Perhaps the method they used was just as embarassing but it did cover the letter of the law!

Readers are requested to propose questions or cases for solution concerning theology, canon law, liturgy and any other department of sacred science that may be of interest to the clergy.

pastoral Reflections

ODD PRIESTS

No matter how odd we may be ourselves, we priests have a tendency to brand some of our brother priests as odd. We subconsciously, at least, categorize certain priests as odd. By standards of worldly wisdom some of our brethren are a bit off-brand. But they are nonetheless priests of God.

The fact that they are priests, and especially the fact that they persevered as priests, indicates that they have been called by God, strengthened by the grace of God, and made instruments in the hands of God for the salvation of souls. Who will dare estimate the good they have done and continue to do for souls?

Even when by their tactless methods they sometimes drive people away from the Church, can we not say that perhaps God permits this because the lay persons concerned spurned grace and deserve to be deprived of the Faith?

In a certain sense a priest must be odd by the standards of the world. If he is in complete conformity with average people, then he is victim of a mediocrity that is scarcely compatible with being wholly dedicated to the cause of Christ. Certainly some of the priests canonized as saints were odd by worldly standards. Some were odd also in the estimation of their fellow priests. Yet they had the solid qualities of the priesthood where it mattered. They but lacked some of the amenities that did not matter.

Surely no priest who saves souls for Christ seems odd to Christ. We too should see beneath superficial appearances and practically adore the priest, any priest, as another Christ. He is doing the work of Christ, at Christ's invitation. If Christ picked him, who are we to be critical?

YOUR CROSS YOUR WORK

The priesthood is broader than a parish or a classroom or a desk in the chancery office. All priests together do the work of the priesthood. The priests assigned to desk work with little direct contact with souls may in God's providence be doing more for the salvation of souls than some of their more active brethren.

So too the bed-fast priest who offers his seige of sickness and pain to God may effect more good for souls than the healthy priest who can and does say Mass, but who says it with no real spirit of sacrifice.

We human priests in a sense have a way of limiting the effectiveness of Christ our Lord in His works, and in His official way of giving honor to the Father in the sacrifice of the Mass. We can lessen the effectiveness of the Mass, just as we can increase its benefits for the Church. Of course the

Mass is infinite, but we can help or hinder its being applied *ex opere operantis*.

What Christ wants of His priest is an oblation of self. In whatever form this is made, in whatever form it may be made, it makes the priest like Christ, who came to do the will of His Father.

We might like to pick and choose our work. To a certain extent this is our privilege, as we early in life decide upon our specific vocation. But once we have our appointment in the priesthood, our Lord wants of us nothing less than complete obedience. What there is to be done, that is what He wants of us, and with generosity. If it is by typing marriage cases, or ringing doorbells, or counting money, or lying paralyzed, or struggling to keep out of mortal sin, this is what He wants of us. By doing what we have to do we are being priests after the heart of Christ.

No other priest has a better appointment than ours. No one has a better opportunity than we have. If we do what there is for us to do, wherever that may be, we cannot possibly do any better. Even if some cross to bear is all we can do, then our cross is our work. In bearing our cross we are saving souls. Yes, we might be saving souls which our more active brethren could never reach.

DUTY BUT PRAYER

We might remember the story of the Mother Superior who interrupted the Divine Office in choir to have the nuns "say some prayers" because a storm was raging outside. We priests sometimes act in similar fashion. Sometimes when reciting the Divine Office during Mass we will stop praying the Office at the Elevations in order to say some kind of prayer of adoration—as if the Office itself were not the official prayer of adoration and praise, as it is.

Prayer is prayer, and it is hardly necessary to stop praying to pray.

We may feel we are cheating if we say the Office before or after Mass, as if we should be saying prayers of preparation and thanksgiving. Yet liturgical writers constantly point out that the Divine Office is the prayer setting for the Mass—as is brought out so clearly in collegiate churches by the de facto connection between Office and Mass.

There is, it is true, an official thanksgiving after Mass, and it is said ideally as the priest leaves the altar. It takes but a brief time to say it. There is also a suggested preparation for Mass, which certainly one can profitably use. And one does well to heed the admonition of making a period of pre-Mass mental prayer. But in addition to these, the Office is excellent.

To try to make a morning meditation on an empty mind is often a useless and frustrating experience. But to recite the Office and then quite naturally to continue on into mental prayer is not only psychologically possible but spiritually profitable as well.

T.C. Siekman

BOOK-REVIEW Selections

WHAT IS THE BIBLE? by Henri-Daniel-Rops. Transl. by J.R. Foster. Hawthorne. 128 pp. $2.95

WHAT IS FAITH? by Eugene Joly. Transl. by Dom Illtyd Trethowan Hawthorne. 144 pp. $2.95

It is fitting that these two studies appear together as the first volumes to be published in the "Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism." Although not first in the over-all series, designed to cover every aspect of Catholic faith and knowledge, they lay a good foundation and complement each other splendidly. Each is concerned with presenting man's spiritual development as a progressive force, a constant reaching out toward the light, and each points up the necessity of judging modern man against that concept of man revealed in the Bible and made possible by faith.

With the brillant, sure strokes of the true scholar, Mr. Daniel-Rops brings to life in a slim volume the reality, purpose, and inspiration of the Bible. Presenting it as an exciting form of real history given to us for our religious instruction (not our scientific), he emphasizes the progressive enlightenment the Bible has brought us. "The truth that brings perfection and salvation was certainly not revealed by God at one blow," he says. All through history we have an ascent toward the light, with the New Testament the proper culmination of the Old.

He points out, too, the necessity of accepting the Bible as the Book of man. It did not fall miraculously from heaven, he warns, and to understand it rightly we must know the conditions under which it was written, the personalities of the authors, and the different literary forms it used. Approach the Bible in a spirit of reverence and love, he says, and it will become the source of knowledge, strength, and inspiration it was meant to be.

* * *

Whereas the Daniel-Rops book is highly informative and makes easy reading **What is Faith?** requires serious study. Here we are dealing with an abstract subject and while the approach is not textual, it is often complicated.

Addressed to the unbeliever and to those who need reassurance, it avoids the usual dogmatic definitions. In a series of philosophical reflections, designed to open the mind of the reader, the author considers faith based on historical evidence; faith as the fruit of a moral experience, that is as a definite encounter between God and man; faith as a set of values; and, in conclusion, faith as a message of hope and spiritual fulfillment.

Of special interest is Father Joly's idea that faith consists of an initial encounter with God, wherein He takes the initiative, and continues as a pro-

gressive lifelong engagement if it is kept alive by hearing His word, by prayer, the Sacraments, and by love of neighbor. In this way our life will be animated by faith, he argues, and the sanctity of a layman in the twentieth century can only be that of a man who is "engaged by his faith in a Christian confrontation."

Topical and practical, both books make a worthy introduction to an important Catholic publishing project. The 150-volume series will be published at the rate of two per month.

J. R. Lynch

THE CHALLENGE OF BERNADETTE, by Hugh Ross Williamson. The Newman Press. 115 pp. $1.95

It is to a delicate, a difficult task that this man Williamson has harnessed himself. But that he has succeeded there is no doubt. We are happy that he has given us the pen picture of the challenge that God and His Blessed Mother have hurled at us through their little handmaiden, St. Bernadette Soubirous.

For a challenge it was, and a challenge it is this new unmistakable "sign" of our Lady's message to Bernadette, a "sign" that demands admission of the unique truth of the Roman Catholic Church as it is today.

Here is a message roughly and bluntly brought home to the world that the Virgin through and with her Divine Son is working miracles at Lourdes. The fact is conspicuous, is visible to anyone. Well then, she exists. And if she exists, since she exists, men have to acknowledge that the teaching of the catechism which they thought so foolish, is not so, and therefore the Church and all her dogmas are binding.

And here the trouble begins. If they hearken to their consciences, they have to give up a host of pleasures and turn their lives upside down at the feet of a priest. If they do not do so, owing to human respect and cowardice, they are then in a permanent state of simmering uneasiness and self-reproach. They are unbelievers. But the challenge is addressed not to unbelievers only. Indeed, not primarily. Bernadette feared only one thing—"bad Catholics." Three times reiterated, Our Lady's challenge rings down the years: "Penance, Penance, Penance."

To one and all, and specially to the beloved members of the Protestant churches who have forgotten what they are supposed to protest against, we recommend the reading of "The Message of Bernadette."

J. M. Lelen, Ph. D.

PADRE PIO, by Nesta de Robeck. Bruce, 144 pp. $2.95

It is with diffidence that we begin reading this life of a priest still alive. "It is good to hide the secret of the king." This text in Tobias was enough for us. But we went on listening to the words of the Angel Raphael and we heard that "it is honorable to reveal and confess the works of God." (Tob. 12, 7) Since it is so, we have read and advise others to read this not uneventful but unassuming and unsensational life of Padre Pio by Miss de Robeck. It is both instructive and interesting in that it shows God's dealings with each soul that He has created and which He continues to create with His perennial Providence. He gives special graces to some of them—more to some than to others, but sufficient to each one of

them. The fact is that gratuitous are His graces, and it is not given to us to fathom the infinitude of His almighty mercy which pervades all His works.

We confess, however, that the main, useful charm of the present volume consists in a long, solid meditation on Christ's Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, written by Padre Pio and published in extenso. Here the Agony is considered as the Heart of His Passion and the Passion of His Heart. It is a difficult and mysterious subject, but the darkness of its own mysteriousness need not have the additional obscurity of human ignorance. No one insists on the depths and difficulty of God's revelation more than St. Paul, but no one shows it forth so clearly and makes it so reasonable to the inquirers of his own times. He told the wise men who were wise with worldly wisdom that they would be sure to mistake and pass by the Wisdom of God. But he assured the simple and the lowly that the truth need be no secret for them; they were the ones for whom it was meant.

J. M. Lelen, Ph. D.

NEW LIFE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, by Leo R. Ward. Herder. 198 pp. $3.95.

Written as an appeal for new inspiration in Catholic schools, this book has certainly attained its objective. This work would prove very enlightening to teachers in Catholic schools. Father Ward has been very blunt in his attack on the purpose underlying the Catholic educational system. His main point seems to be that the purpose of Catholic schools should be clarified. Catholic schools should be centers of learning—an integrated learning. The Christian philosophy must permeate every branch of learning. Our main objective in forming Catholic schools must not be just to safeguard the faith and morals of our students. The aim must be much higher than that. We must produce scholars, people with an appreciation of learning. The book closes with some very good objectives which should be sought in a Catholic school.

The jacket of **New Life in Catholic Schools** states that the essay was meant to be controversial. It has certainly achieved that purpose. Stating his views in very clear, precise terms, the author has offered innovations which he claims must be accepted. As one unskilled, I do not wholly agree with the author. In so far as he has made me clarify my own opinions, this work was worthwhile. The ideal standard which the author sets up is surely one which we would all like to attain. Whether or not his method of solving the problem is possible, remains to be seen. The author was very honest in his criticism. Much of it was justified and should be remedied, but the author has not taken into consideration the factors causing the situation.

SINCERE THANKS

The Editors wish to express their heartfelt appreciation to the many readers who made gift subscriptions to PASTORAL LIFE for the newly ordained and missionary priests.

We are pleased to assure you of their gratitude and prayers for this thoughtful expression of priestly friendship.

THE EDITORS

He has emphasized the failures and has not sufficiently stressed the accomplishments of Christian educators. Pius XI's encyclical, **Divini Illius Magistri,** is very enlightening as to the purpose of Christian education. Some of the points in this book could raise quite a bit of controversy. Since this was the author's purpose, he has accomplished what he set out to do.

Sr. Marie Eugenie, C.S.J.B.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF SAINT THERESE OF LISIEUX, Translated by Ronald A. Knox.. P.J. Kenedy. 320 pp. $4.50.

A good, highly interesting, translation of St. Therese's own record of her path to greatness. The original **L'Histoire d'une Ame** had been considerably altered and practically rewritten in an effort to put it in better literary form. The doctrine remains almost unchanged in Father Knox's translation; he has tried to keep the style simple as St. Therese was, and as original as she wrote it. St. Therese reappears as a somewhat spoiled brat who overcame great personal imperfections to become a saint.

CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS, by John C. Ford S.J., and Gerald Kelly, S.J. Newman Press. 345 pp. $4.50.

This one, too, should be of interest to both the layman and the parish priest, who want to acquaint themselves with contemporary moral problems. The authors are both well-known writers and top rank theologians. Some

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LUNACY AND LETTERS, by G. K. CHESTERTON. Edited by Dorothy Collins. Sheed & Ward. 192 p. $3.00

Adventurers into the world of ideas will welcome this new collection of Chesterton's essays. Covering a wide range of subjects they have been selected from articles he wrote for **The London Daily News** during the years 1901 to 1911. Thirty-eight in all, they have previously appeared in book form.

Perhaps the most striking reader reaction is their amazing timeliness. How helpful and pleasant that a literary genius should apply himself to the field of current madness. "Lunacy and Letters" still go hand in hand as contemporary scholars worship symbols at the expense of reality. "It is not the poets who go mad," Chesterton reminds us, "it is the mathematicians, the logicians, the numberers of stars, and the counters of grass."

His essay on the theatre should be required reading for Broadway playwrights with their steady crop of dreary offerings. A play must be a festival, our critic reminds us. Once we talk about it as "dissecting life" or as a "moral analysis," we lose its essential nature.

"A Plea for Partial Historians" has that happy combination of common sense and wit so much a part of Chesterton. If you do not take sides, he argues, you say nothing. At least with partial historians we learn something of the thought of the period.

From "Heroic Wit" we have his own definition of literature as the ability "to give something pointed in the mere form which shall correspond to something pointed, something inexpressibly pointed in the emotions." How consistently he meets this aim.

Although sharply critical of human shortcomings, his great faith in the dignity of man and his defense of the Christian tradition are evident throughout. Instead of leaving us with the pessimism and despair of today's whining critic, he treats us to laughter and hope.

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J. R. Lynch

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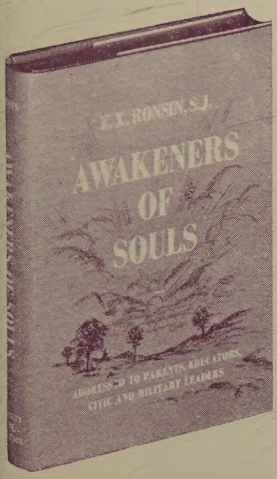

Following his best seller, *To Govern, Is To Love*, now in the hands of more than one-third of the Religious Superiors of the entire world, the admirers of Father Ronsin's forward-looking views will welcome his entrance into the social education field. No longer restricting his comments to religious superiors, the author presents a heart-searching study on the duties of husbands and wives towards one another, the essentials of a Christian home, the responsibilities of all in charge of normal or underprivileged children, the general's relationship to his men, the factory owner to his workers and the mutual obligations of friendship. The beautiful treatment of the different ages touches with gentle tenderness on the duties and rights of the aged, and the tremendous possibilities for good open to many who desire to help others in every generation.

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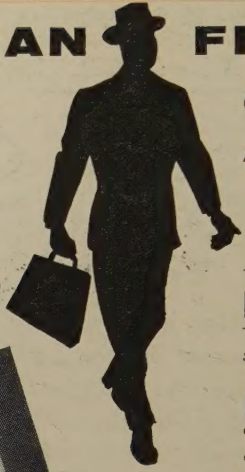

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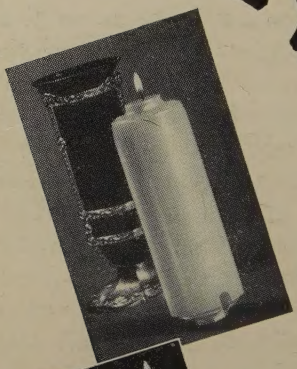

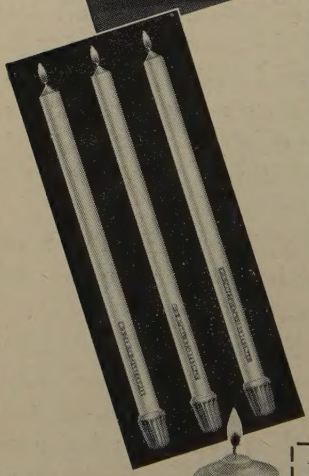

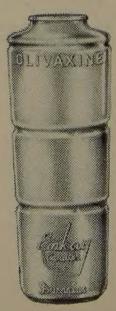

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